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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

This article draws findings published in Eirini Karamouzi, *Greece, the EEC and the Cold war, 1974-1979. The Second Enlargement*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

## Introduction

- 1 On 12 June 1975, just a few days after the ratification of the new Greek constitution, Constantinos Karamanlis' government submitted a formal application for Greece to join the European Economic Community (EEC). On the same day, Karamanlis informed the ambassadors of the nine member states of the Community that "Greece belongs and desires to belong in Europe, with which it has been connected for a long time in many ways – politically, economically and historically. Today's initiative constitutes a natural continuity of the policy I inaugurated fifteen years ago... Greece does not desire full membership solely on economic grounds. The reasons are mainly political and refer to the consolidation of democracy and the future of the nation".<sup>1</sup>
- 2 The accepted narrative in Greek political history has tended to describe Greece's decision to seek full EEC membership as a gradual process that had its origins in the late 1950s and especially, in the 1961 Athens Association Agreement.<sup>2</sup> During this period the European option evolved to become for the Greeks, almost a panacea that would cure all the country's problems, from economic modernization to external security.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Kostas Yfantis, focusing mainly on the security dimension, pointed out "that membership was perceived as a means to balance United States' influence and

power, while cementing Greece's Western orientation and commitment".<sup>4</sup> Jose M. Magone agrees with this argument, stating that "Karamanlis presented the EEC as an alternative to the rejected patronage of the United States".<sup>5</sup> Similarly, Giannis Valinakis claims that "it was only natural to consider the European option as the only way to strengthen Greece's bargaining power and defence capabilities vis-à-vis Turkey".<sup>6</sup> Other commentators, such as Panos Kazakos, Loukas Tsoukalis and George Yannopoulos, focus on the highly beneficial economic effects of a possible entry into the EEC.<sup>7</sup>

- 3 Yet amid the voluminous writings on the security and economic dimensions of Greece's application to join the European Community, there has been relatively limited historical and archival-based analysis of an important political dimension to the issue, namely, the link between European integration and the democratization process in Greece. This link has been studied within a specific, albeit exponentially important, field of "transition" literature that seeks to assess the importance of the international dimension in shaping and constraining national democratization processes.<sup>8</sup> For instance, Geoffrey Pridham and Nikoforos Diamantouros have documented the close relationship between European integration and democratic consolidation in Southern Europe.<sup>9</sup> Laurence Whitehead notes that the "prospect of membership in the European community produced a substantial long-term pressure for democratization".<sup>10</sup>
- 4 While accepting the importance of economic and security considerations, this paper will shed light on what ultimately drove Greece's European policy, namely, the overriding importance of the democratization factor in Karamanlis' quest for Europe. In Athens, a strong link was to develop between the European option and the democratization process, to the point that the two became very closely interrelated, especially in the minds of the country's ruling elite.

## The first crucial months of transition

- 5 On 24 July 1974, Constantinos Karamanlis was recalled from his self-imposed exile in Paris to restore democracy in his homeland. This was in the aftermath of the collapse of the Greek military junta prompted by Turkey's invasion of Cyprus on 20 July 1974.<sup>11</sup> Karamanlis returned as a *deus ex machina* to carry out a transformation of the Greek political system and to consolidate democracy. He was considered to be the most suitable person to facilitate the transition from dictatorship to democracy. His anti-communist record and his conservative credentials in the 1950s and early 1960s, coupled with his critical attitude towards the junta, made him acceptable to the military, the anti-monarchist right and the political center respectively.<sup>12</sup>
- 6 As has been suggested by many political scientists, Greek transition to democracy was to become primarily, a "from above project", since the seven years of dictatorship and the events that led to its fall "were not particularly conducive to a comprehensive and collective strategy for democratization".<sup>13</sup> Upon his return, Karamanlis faced a situation of "structural and institutional tabula rasa".<sup>14</sup> The monarchy and the army, once important actors in the formulation of Greek foreign and domestic policy, had been completely discredited in the aftermath of the fall of the colonels. The weight of the transition process was thus, inevitably, to fall on the shoulders of Karamanlis and his very close associates.

- 7 The task confronting the new Greek prime minister was daunting. The fall of the junta and the advent of democracy were linked to national humiliation over Cyprus and the possibility of a war with Turkey. Moreover, the imposition of the military dictatorship was viewed by many in Greece as having resulted from the discredited pre-coup political system with its permeability to foreign influence. This conviction led a significant section of political forces and public opinion in Greece to demand a truly new beginning and a break with the post-war period.<sup>15</sup> In turn, a genuine pluralist democracy presupposed and demanded the reduction and control of foreign interference in Greek domestic affairs.<sup>16</sup>
- 8 The strong foreign influence, which went all the way back to the establishment of the Greek state in 1830, meant that Greek public opinion took for granted the existence of an explicit connection between a political regime and its external links.<sup>17</sup> Greece had a tradition of participation in numerous alliances throughout its modern history. Such alliances had enabled Greece to strengthen its national security and advance its economic development. Often, however, they had resulted in handicapped democratic institutions and had subjected Greece's national domestic politics to foreign influence, if not outright interference.<sup>18</sup>
- 9 With the settlement following the Second World War, Greece experienced a separate and traumatic civil war. The defeat of the Communists was achieved, ultimately, only with direct help from the British, and then from the Americans in the latter phases of the civil war. From the declaration of the Truman Doctrine in 1947, the United States was to spend nearly \$4 billion in economic and military assistance to various Greek governments. This had succeeded in minimizing Soviet influence in the region and also, provided NATO and the United States a paramount strategic position in the Mediterranean.<sup>19</sup> However, the receptiveness to foreign interference by the Greek ruling elites also contributed to making the United States' involvement in the country's domestic affairs so intense.<sup>20</sup> This conveyed the impression of a country willingly open to penetration and external manipulation, confirming the traditional "permeability of Greek domestic politics to foreign influence".<sup>21</sup>
- 10 The dependence of Greece on the United States or, at least, the Greek public's perception of this, is important in explaining the wave of vehement anti-Americanism that dominated the Greek domestic scene during and, especially after, the military dictatorship and the Cyprus debacle that followed.<sup>22</sup> Although recent research has debunked the myth that the United States gave a green light to the coup that brought the brutish and brutal junta to power, the majority of Greeks believed the contrary.<sup>23</sup> This was to be highlighted by Greek foreign minister George Mavros who, in a discussion with Helmut Schmidt, the German chancellor, was to sigh dramatically, that "every Greek [is] convinced that the Greek dictatorship was supported by the United States".<sup>24</sup>
- 11 The transition to democracy in Greece was taking place, therefore, in a climate of acute ambivalence. The new leadership in Athens was under great domestic pressure to act when confronted with the grave consequences of the double Turkish invasion of Cyprus.<sup>25</sup> The new Prime Minister concluded however, that the option of war against Turkey would be a parlous course to follow since seven years of the junta had left both the country's frontiers unprotected and the army in a ruinous state of disorder. Moreover, Karamanlis had to satisfy people's growing thirst for the country's independence from foreign interference and to achieve this, meant "reducing Greece's

reliance upon the United States and NATO, at least on the surface”.<sup>26</sup> The dilemma for Karamanlis was however, that as long as Turkey remained the principal threat, any moves to isolate Greece from the United States and NATO would only benefit the enemy. The new government had to perform a careful balancing act.

- 12 Instead of taking the path to war with Turkey, Karamanlis chose to withdraw from the military command of NATO on 14 August 1974 and he requested also, that formal negotiations begin on the future of United States’ bases and facilities on Greek soil.<sup>27</sup> In the years that followed, he accounted for his decision by saying that “the withdrawal from NATO was not only justified but necessary. The fury of the Greek and Cypriot people was so great at that time that the only alternative would have been war”.<sup>28</sup> This decision, made at the height of the Cyprus crisis, reflected the frustration of the Greeks at the failure of the United States and its NATO allies to forestall Turkish military actions.<sup>29</sup> It had become by then a universal conviction among the Greek public that reducing and controlling foreign interference would be one of the primary preconditions for building a strong pluralist democracy. Or, as Karamanlis put it in a private letter to a close friend, “the establishment of a democratic regime required a change in Greece’s relationship with the United States”.<sup>30</sup>
- 13 The fact that during this period Karamanlis turned towards Europe has been interpreted as a search for a United States substitute.<sup>31</sup> However, records clearly show that even though he pursued a European path and withdrew from NATO, he did not denounce the country’s relationship with the United States. Instead, Karamanlis opted for a multilateral foreign policy, signalling a disengagement from the monolithic approaches of the past.<sup>32</sup> His multilateralism however, did not mean ending the close relationship between Greece and the United States.<sup>33</sup> Greece was still a Cold War frontline state in need of United States’ security and protection and Karamanlis was nothing if not pragmatic, keenly aware both of political realities and the limitations of the EEC’s security capabilities.<sup>34</sup>
- 14 While there were potential security dimensions over integration into Western Europe for Greeks to consider, an analysis of archival sources shows that other political considerations were to predominate. As the leader of a small country with relatively feeble domestic institutions, Karamanlis was sure in his belief that, alongside the creation of a legitimate governmental climate and economic modernization, the Greeks needed to join the EEC to build a solid democracy.<sup>35</sup> Thus, the main reason behind Greece’s choice for gaining European membership was to use this as a political instrument to strengthen democratization and reduce the risks of any return to military regimes. From the very beginning therefore, the Greek foreign policy commitment to gaining membership of the EEC was enmeshed in the politics of democratic transition in Greece.<sup>36</sup>
- 15 On 22 August 1974, just a few days after the Karamanlis government took office, Greece formally requested the reactivation the Athens Association agreement of 1961 that had been frozen in April 1967 following the Colonels’ coup. The suspension of the Association Agreement to the status of “current administration” after the coup, coupled with the forced withdrawal of Greece from the Council of Europe in 1969, had contributed to the erosion of domestic approval for the junta and frustrated the attempts of the dictators to gain support from important European political elites.<sup>37</sup> The financial consequences of the suspension of the Association Agreement had harmed the Greek economy. Even the dictators were seriously troubled by the EEC

decision and tried to lift the freeze by threatening the European Commission with legal action while, at the same time, trying to dispel perceptions that they were diplomatically isolated. In refusing to reconsider the suspension of the Association, the European Community was demonstrating that a lack of democracy was, and would be, the principal hurdle to any further integration.<sup>38</sup>

- 16 Therefore, in marked contrast to the perceived indifference, even tolerance, of the Americans towards the Colonels' rule, the EEC had used its diplomatic and economic weight to undermine the legitimacy of the military dictatorship. It was clear to Karamanlis that the EEC link could have positive effects on the Greek political system even though the Community's role in the collapse of military rule in Greece had been, ultimately, secondary in comparison to external events.<sup>39</sup> Unlike NATO, the EEC had played, throughout, a crucial role in denying the regime legitimacy by insisting on democratic preconditions and by isolating Greece from the Western family of democracies.<sup>40</sup>
- 17 Therefore, to the Greeks, the Community became associated with liberal democratic values. As Emanuel Gazzo, the mastermind and editor of *Agence Europe*, aptly points out, the EEC's decision to freeze the Association gave rise to "an interesting phenomenon where the process of European integration was identified with the defence of democratic values".<sup>41</sup> It was this identification that contributed to the emergence of the Community as an institution enjoying significant goodwill among Greece's new democratic leadership, especially during the first years of transition from dictatorship to democracy in 1974 and 1975. From the very first day, Karamanlis emphasized the support of the Community to achieving democratization. It was hardly surprising therefore, that Greece's memorandum to the European Economic Community on 22 August 1974 focused on the influence of the EEC on the collapse of the junta and identified the Community with the upholding of liberal democratic values.<sup>42</sup>
- 18 In this respect, the Athens government was confident that the immediate restoration of the Association Agreement would constitute a vote of confidence from the Nine. Clearly, from the very beginning, Karamanlis' aim was to bring into play the EEC's prestige as a defender of democracy and democratic values. Moreover, the "unfreezing" of the Association with the EEC would also bring economic benefits that would be vital to Greek efforts to democratize. The emphasis for Athens now, was on the need to revive the Association and most importantly, to move forward and harmonize Greek agricultural policy with the Common Agricultural Policy obtaining the remaining \$55.7 million from the first financial protocol of the agreement and including the three new EEC members, Britain, Denmark and Ireland into the Association agreement.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, one of the most pressing issues for the emerging Greek democracy was the revitalization of its economy. In autumn of 1974, growth had stalled and there was a resurgence of the 30% inflation that had plagued the economy from the last quarter of 1972 into the first quarter of 1974. The perennial trade deficit had to be reduced as it had risen to a staggering \$400 million, exacerbated by soaring oil prices and plummeting earnings from tourism and emigrant remittances.<sup>44</sup>
- 19 Karamanlis' insistence on the integration of Greece into the European family as being the most appropriate solution for its political as well as economic problems was boosted by the expression of solidarity with Greece's nascent democracy by Western Europe. On 19 August 1974, the president of the European Parliament (EP), Cornelis Berkhouwer, visited Athens to mark publicly the institution's support for all Greek

endeavours towards achieving democracy.<sup>45</sup> This proved to be extremely important to the Greeks. In their search for political acceptance and legitimacy, since 1967, the EP had been the most vociferous of the Community's bodies in its criticism of the Colonels.

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- 20 A close associate of Karamanlis, Petros Molyviatis, has confirmed in an interview that the strategic choice of the EEC dominated the prime minister's mind: "all the decisions taken in the first crucial months of the transition constituted an integral part of the government's central European policy and ambitions".<sup>47</sup> Likewise, in early August 1974, Greek minister of economics, Ioannis Pesmazoglou, in a meeting at the British Embassy in Athens, explained that, "it was vital to the government that their relations with the EEC should not only be normalized but be seen to be normalized, and that this in itself would make a great contribution to the new team's stability and to the cause of democracy itself in Greece".<sup>48</sup>
- 21 An indication of the emerging link between Greece's European integration and its democratization was the parallel course that the government was following in domestic affairs and in its policies concerning the EEC. At all stages during the transition period the Greek government made sure that the one process complemented the other. On 23 September 1974 it abolished law 509, under which the Communist party had been banned. This new institutional arrangement paved the way for the legalization of the Greek Communist Party (KKE), outlawed since 1947 as a result of the civil war. Karamanlis' decision was the validation of his goal, declared earlier in July 1974, to pursue a policy of national reconciliation which would put an end to the divisions of the civil war that had been perpetuated by the exclusivist post-war political system.<sup>49</sup> In an interview with Roger Massip, a well-known French journalist, Karamanlis confessed that "the legalisation of KKE was a necessary measure in order to equate ourselves [Greeks] with the democratic countries of the West. If I hadn't done it, we would not have been able to convince our European partners of the sincerity of our efforts to restore democracy in Greece".<sup>50</sup> The European option, therefore, thoroughly permeated Karamanlis' transition strategy although it was not declared publicly at the outset. While he was always keen to seek EEC full membership, he remained cautious enough to await successful internal reforms. This caution accounts for his initial focus on the state of the Greek Association with the Community.
- 22 His hesitant stance was necessary since Karamanlis had not yet legitimized his power or position, exercising these so far, through the grace and favour of a section of the army. Accordingly, the summer of 1974 witnessed an impressive series of actions in Greece, each of which would contribute to the restoration of a democratic political system. Along with the constitutional act of 1 August 1974, Greece abolished the constitution promulgated by the military dictatorship and reactivated the 1952 constitution while excluding the clauses related to the head of the state –namely the issue of the monarchy.<sup>51</sup> The resuscitated 1952 constitution allowed the prime minister to re-assert civilian control over the military, but above all, Karamanlis was able to restore individual and political liberties. The latter was essential if the new government was to convey the message of a genuine democratic transformation that would permit Greece eventually to resume its place in democratic Europe, and in particular, the Council of Europe.<sup>52</sup>
- 23 Notwithstanding the absence of elections, the Europeans were quick to reward Karamanlis' initial steps towards democracy and encourage the democratization



process even more through the swift readmission of Greece to the Council of Europe on 27 September and the EEC's decision to reactivate the Association Agreement on 17 September 1974. In order to comprehend how important and significant these decisions were, it must be noted that at this point, post-junta Greece had yet to conduct elections. The Council of Europe could have taken a strictly legalistic view on Greek readmission on the basis of Article 25 which could exclude any country until it held democratic elections. As the perceived cradle of European civilization however, Greece had special claims to sympathy and the Europeans expected these moves to encourage and strengthen the country's processes in democratization.<sup>53</sup> All the above specific measures, along with the unfreezing of the Association, publicly underlined Western Europe's welcome of democracy's return to Greece.<sup>54</sup>

- 24 As the Greeks would experience during the negotiations to enter into the EEC, there was a real distinction between the rhetoric and the reality of the Community. Although the EEC was quick to reactivate the Athens agreement, there was a difference of opinion on what normalisation would actually entail. Officially, reactivation of the association meant the release of the outstanding \$56 million under the frozen financial protocol, the ratification of an additional protocol with the newer EEC members, the harmonisation of agriculture and putting into force once again, all the arrangements that had applied before April 1967.
- 25 There was a huge divergence in the Community's and Greek perceptions of what harmonisation of agriculture actually entailed. In a meeting with Commission president François-Xavier Ortoli, Psemazoglou underlined the importance of agriculture to his country.<sup>55</sup> However, agricultural commissioner, Pierre Lardinois, insisted that the Community would not be able to respond to the Greek demands over agriculture, pointing out that: "for example, there is a whole series of regulations in the Community that did not exist in 1967".<sup>56</sup> Negotiations on agricultural harmonisation had taken place from 1962 to 1967 with little success and had been broken off when the Association was frozen. The signs were that if anything, agriculture would be an even greater problem for the newly enlarged Community.<sup>57</sup>
- 26 The apparent procrastination in getting on with agricultural harmonisation planted the first seeds of doubt in Karamanlis' mind over his transition strategy. It appeared that if he wanted to reap entirely the rewards of European support in political and economic terms, he would have to accelerate the process of integrating Greece fully into the European Community. Even though an eventual Greek membership of the EEC was at the forefront of his strategy, Karamanlis had been hesitant so far in pursuing it directly because of domestic political and economic difficulties. Instead, he had opted, as a first stage, for the full implementation of the Association Agreement seeking to link the European integration process with the country's democratisation. The news from Brussels, however, had not been encouraging. The Nine understood the importance of the European link and had offered the support the Greek government had requested; yet, at the same time, they did not seem willing to go beyond the minimum required. They would only reactivate those parts of the Association Agreement that were easy to implement whereas harmonisation of agriculture, which was so vital to Greece, could easily be allowed to drag on for a long time, as in the past.
- 27 Karamanlis thus, became convinced that a full restoration of effective relations with the EEC was contingent on the existence not just of a Greek civilian government, but also, of a democratically elected one. With his mind made up, Karamanlis announced to



the Greek people that elections would be held on the historic day of 17 November, the anniversary of the 1973 student uprising against the junta. However, his decision to hold elections so quickly was criticised heavily by opposition parties on a number of grounds. Their main argument rested on the contention that holding elections so soon after the restoration of democracy did not allow enough time for all the parties to organise a proper electoral campaign.<sup>58</sup> Karamanlis worried that, with time passing, the problems endemic to Greek democracy would revive army solidarity against civilian “mismanagement”.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, the longer the elections were delayed, the more ammunition the EEC would accumulate to resist the further integration of Greece.

## From Elections to EEC application

- 28 The 17 November 1974 election was a personal triumph for Karamanlis. New Democracy won a massive victory: 54 per cent of the popular vote and 219 seats out of the 300-seat parliament.<sup>60</sup> The implicit slogan of the campaign, “Karamanlis or the tanks”, illustrated well the unprecedented desire of the Greek people to ensure democracy at any cost. To entrench stability still further within the country, a referendum on the future of the monarchy followed soon after the parliamentary elections. Displaying the same respect for democratic procedures, on 8 December 1974 nearly 70 per cent of Greeks voted for a republic and against re-instituting the monarchy. By the end of 1974, the two major partners of the old establishment –the army and the monarchy– had been deprived of political power. Henceforth, power was concentrated in the hands of political parties and parliament, a development that reinforced Greece’s image as an emerging and genuine democracy.
- 29 In an interview with the foreign press, Karamanlis was asked to outline the main achievements of the National Unity Government and state the main goals of the newly elected government. His answer was “the restoration of democracy and the consolidation of democracy” respectively.<sup>61</sup> The EEC had played a major role in Greece’s recent achievements. The approval it had provided had added to the new government’s legitimacy. Most importantly perhaps, Karamanlis’ government had capitalised on the prospect of joining the EEC as part of its transition strategy to safeguard Greek democracy. However, the next stage was to be more difficult. Karamanlis had recognized early on that European support would not necessarily be guaranteed to Greece over the long term, and that, even more worryingly, the current status of the Association Agreement did not meet the pressing demands of the Greeks for the agricultural harmonization and further economic assistance that were so important to the stabilization process. It is not surprising that in the aftermath of the elections, Karamanlis highlighted persistently, the Europe–liberal democracy link, both in public and in contacts with leaders from the EEC.
- 30 However, not all Greek political actors welcomed Karamanlis’ strategy of linking Greece’s integration in European institutions with the process of democratization. In fact, even before the formal EEC application had been lodged, a series of parliamentary debates took place that indicated clearly, that EEC membership was a matter of dispute in the Greek political arena. With the exception of the Centre Union, which under Mavros’ leadership embraced the European beliefs of the ruling party, PASOK and the KKE opposed the choice of the EEC on the grounds that it was detrimental to national independence and served the interests of international capitalism.<sup>62</sup>

- 31 In spite of such opposition, Karamanlis held firmly onto the European option. The first months of the reactivated Association agreement had convinced him that such a framework was inadequate for Greece's political and economic ambitions. As Ortoli admitted later, "the Greek government quickly realized that the interest aroused in Europe by the change of regime could quickly erode and the government risked losing the support of the Community, if it remained within the framework of association. The difficulties encountered in 1974-5 concerning the harmonization of agricultural policies and the current delays in the negotiations of the second financial protocol show that these apprehensions are not without foundation".<sup>63</sup> Therefore, it was becoming imperative for Greece to be integrated into the EEC as an equal member. On 24-25 February 1975, during an official visit of French foreign minister, Jean Sauvagnargues, to Athens, Karamanlis reiterated his European vision once more, but this time explicitly asking for full membership.<sup>64</sup>
- 32 While discussing the EEC with Gaston Thorn, prime minister of Luxembourg, Karamanlis was confident that the aspiration and expectation of achieving membership eventually, with all its attendant economic and political benefits, would hasten the development of democratic restoration and would also convey to the Greek electorate the importance of Greece being integrated into Europe for democratic stability.<sup>65</sup> Karamanlis believed deeply in the reciprocal relationship between democratic consolidation and accession to the EEC. The consistency of his tactics was underlined later, during Karamanlis' official visits to France and Germany between April and May 1975.<sup>66</sup>
- 33 The following month, Karamanlis succeeded in having the new constitution approved and put into force on 11 June 1975. Although the first governmental draft had been heavily criticised by the opposition parties, the main provisions remained intact, leading the opposition to boycott the approval of the constitution on 7 June 1975. However, the new constitution signaled the normalization of public life and the last step towards the full restoration of democracy. Moreover, it was to secure the legally unhindered accession of Greece to the EEC.<sup>67</sup> Just one day after the activation of the new constitution, Karamanlis applied for full membership of the EEC. The mainstream newspaper *Kathimerini* ran an article on its front page focusing on the reasons that had led the Prime Minister to seek membership. Apart from the economic and security factors, the democratic dimension featured as the most prominent reason.<sup>68</sup>
- 34 According to the newspaper, the EEC application was the last stage of Greece's transition to democracy, but it was at the same time, paradoxically, the starting point for its consolidation. In other words, the prospect of accession had been influential during the one-year period of democratic transition, while the formal application and final accession would become the ultimate guarantee for Greek democratic institutions in the years to come.<sup>69</sup> The latter theme was reiterated in 1980, on the eve of Greece's entry to the EEC by the then foreign minister, Constantinos Mitsotakis, when he argued,
- naturally, we do not expect our nine partners in the Community to become the guardians of Greek democracy. By joining a broader group of like-minded Western Democracies, however, our own democratic institutions will be reinforced. [...] They [potential dictators] are bound to know that the abolition of democracy entails immediate ostracism from the Community. This could have grave internal and external consequences. So, in this respect, the EEC is a safe haven.<sup>70</sup>

## Conclusion

- 35 Karamanlis had unveiled his European option as far back as 1958 when he had requested an Association Agreement for Greece. He pursued the same route, with even more rigour in the name of democratization, from the moment he returned to power in 1974. Under his premiership, Greece invoked the European path from the beginning of its transition towards democracy and ensured both processes ran in a parallel and mutually reinforcing mode. This synergy can be better understood when examined in the light of modern Greek history that shows traditionally, a strong link between the country's external orientation and its domestic political and economic systems. This historical aspect is important if one is to understand why Karamanlis found it so vital, in the aftermath of the fall of the junta and the tragic events in Cyprus, to make a break –in the name of genuine democracy– with the practices of the discredited past. Pre-junta Greece had been subject, in the eyes of Greek public opinion, to direct American interference. Thus, a re-orientation of foreign policy, even if only a cosmetic one, was needed. The launch of a multilateral foreign policy where the European option would feature prominently became the favoured answer to the democratisation puzzle.
- 36 Karamanlis certainly did not look to the EEC as a substitute for United States influence and security even though it cannot be denied that he and his government were deeply bitter about, in particular, the indifferent stance adopted by the Americans during the second invasion of Cyprus by Turkey. The ruling elite hardly even considered the EEC to be an alternative to the United States and NATO. However, the domestic constraints determined by the growing anti-American sentiments that peaked in 1974 left little room for maneuver and do much to account for the country's withdrawal from the military command of NATO. Yet throughout, Karamanlis remained deeply aware of the political and security realities determined by the wider East-West international context. Moreover, the only feasible security gains he expected to reap from entry to the EEC were those emanating from the country's greater international leverage.<sup>71</sup>
- 37 The strategy of linking democratization with Greece's European integration was facilitated by the fact that, in the aftermath of the junta, the EEC had emerged as an institution that enjoyed significant goodwill amongst the Greek public. The freezing of the Athens Association Agreement and the general critical attitude adopted towards the military dictatorship by the EEC had led it to being identified with liberal democratic values. Even those experts in the Greek government who saw things mainly through the prism of economics, now conceded that the European option was the essential element in nurturing a stable Greek democracy.<sup>72</sup>

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## NOTES

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2. . Greece was the first European country to become an associate of the European Community under the Article 238 of the Treaty of Rome. The Athens Agreement was signed on 9 July 1961 and came into force on 1 November 1962. The Association provides among other things, the establishment of a customs union, harmonization of Greek and Community policies over an array of topics such as agriculture and transfer of resources to Greece for the advancement of its economic development.
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## ABSTRACTS

This article sheds light on what drove Greece's European policy in the aftermath of the dictatorship in 1974. Despite evident geostrategic and economic motivations, the article stresses the centrality of the political and democratic dimension. Greece's transition to democracy saw the emergence of a strong link between the European option and the democratization process, especially in the mind of the country's political elite. Constantinos Karamanlis, the Greek prime minister, capitalized greatly on the prospect of EEC membership as part of his transition strategy to safeguard democracy.

Cet article montre les ressorts de la politique européenne de la Grèce au lendemain de la dictature en 1974. Au-delà des évidentes motivations géostratégiques et économiques, l'article souligne la centralité de la dimension politique et démocratique. La transition démocratique de la Grèce a vu l'émergence d'un lien fort entre l'option européenne et le processus de démocratisation, particulièrement auprès de l'élite politique du pays. Le premier ministre grec



Constantinos Karamanlis a largement bénéficié de la perspective de l'entrée de la Grèce dans la Communauté économique européenne dans sa stratégie de transition pour sauvegarder la démocratie.

## INDEX

**Mots-clés:** Grèce, démocratisation, CEE, élargissement, Karamanlis

**Keywords:** Greece, democratization, EEC, enlargement, Karamanlis

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